

**EVEN START FAMILY LITERACY REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL GUIDELINES
2011**

**North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
Office of Early Learning
Even Start Program**

PURPOSE

The purpose of Even Start is to help break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy by (1) improving the educational opportunities of families by integrating early childhood education, adult basic education, and parenting education into a unified family literacy program; and (2) by establishing programs that (a) are implemented through cooperative projects that build on high quality existing community resources to create a new range of services; (b) promote the academic achievement of children and adults; (c) assist children and adults from low income families to achieve challenging State content standards and challenging State student performance standards; and (d) use instructional programs based on scientifically based reading research and addressing the prevention of reading difficulties for children and adults, to the extent such research is available.

DEFINITION OF FAMILY LITERACY

Federal legislation defines family literacy as services, provided to participants on a voluntary basis, that are of sufficient intensity in terms of hours, and of sufficient duration to make sustainable changes in a family, and that integrate all of the following activities:

- Interactive literacy activities between parents and their children.
- Training for parents regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children
- Parent literacy training that leads to economic self-sufficiency.
- Age appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Even Start statute defines “eligible entities” as a partnership composed of both:

- a local educational agency (LEA). The LEA must be one on the partners and must be the fiscal agent for the project.
- a non-profit community-based organization, a public agency other than a local education agency, an institution of higher education, or a public or private nonprofit organization other than an LEA, of demonstrated quality.

Any partner applying as a non-profit organization should place documentation of such status in the appendix. Information demonstrating quality of the organization must also be included.

FUNDING AMOUNTS AND REQUIRED SOURCES

Currently North Carolina receives approximately \$1.6 million, from the U.S. Department of Education, which provides funding for 11 local Even Start Projects, state administration, training and technical assistance. As Congress has not finalized the budget for next year, projections for 2011-12 Even Start funds are unknown at this time. The number of projects to be funded will be dependent upon North Carolina's FY 2011 Even Start allocation from the federal government.

Applicants may request federal funding from a minimum of \$75,000 up to \$175,000. Applicants must also demonstrate their commitment to the project by providing a required local grantee contribution. The total cost of an Even Start Project is comprised of the Federal Even Start portion and that portion contributed by the eligible entity (and other partners). Applicants receiving funds must maintain and document local resources at the following levels:

First year	at least 10 percent of the total project cost
Second year	at least 20 percent of the total project cost
Third year	at least 30 percent of the total project cost
Fourth year	at least 40 percent of the total project cost
Fifth through eighth year	at least 50 percent of the total project cost
Ninth year and beyond	at least 65 percent of the total project cost

The local grantee share may be provided in cash or in kind, fairly evaluated. This share can be obtained from any source - local, state, or federal. Examples include Title I, Part A, Migrant Education, Smart Start, More at Four; Adult Basic Education/Community Colleges; literacy associations; other state and local funds; private foundations and private contributions.

Local contributions must be items that could be paid for with Even Start funds if the local matching contribution was not available. For example, funding for construction cannot be considered a part of a local share because construction is not an allowable expenditure of Even Start funds. Likewise, kindergarten or first grade education would not qualify because it is an entitlement under North Carolina law. Funding for an after-school tutoring or enrichment project or a preschool program could be used as part of the local share because these are not part of the free, public education provided in North Carolina and they're allowable Even Start expenditures.

DURATION OF PROJECTS

Even Start projects are awarded for a period of four years. Grants awarded in July 2011 will continue through June 30, 2015 if requirements are met. In order for a project to continue after the first year, the Department of Public Instruction will review the progress of the project in meeting its program objectives and the North Carolina Family Literacy Performance Indicators. Projects must submit, for approval, continuation applications and local evaluations at the end of each year.

GENERAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Projects must be operated in compliance with the federal Even Start Statute, Subpart 3 of Part B of Title I of the No Child Left Behind Act. (The statute and Even Start information can be found at (<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/evenstartformula/legislation.html>.) All projects are built upon and must address the four required components: adult education, early childhood education, parent training or parent time, and parent and child interaction time. The Local Education Agency (LEA) must be the fiscal agent.

Settings may vary, but all projects must operate on a year round basis, including the provision of some program services during the summer months and also must include some home-based instruction for participating families. Even Start projects must provide intensive family literacy services and demonstrate collaboration among partners. They must involve both parents and children in cooperative, intergenerational projects that build on existing community resources. Children, age birth through seven, may be served or more specific ages may be targeted as long as services are provided for at least a three year age range.

Even Start programs are required to have an annual independent local evaluation. This evaluation will be used for program improvement. Applicants should include a plan and funding for this local evaluation in their application.

Even Start Projects are required to annually report their progress on the North Carolina Family Literacy Performance Indicators. These indicators require Even Start sites to use the CASAS, TABE or BEST to measure performance in adult education. Projects also must assess adult participants' receipt of a high school diploma or GED and their entry into a postsecondary school, job retraining program, employment or career advancement. Young children are assessed using the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test along with an on-going assessment such as Work Sampling, Creative Curriculum, High Scope, etc. Programs also assess attendance of children and for school-age children, consider their improvement in ability to read on grade level or reading readiness and grade retention and promotion.

PROPOSAL REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

Grants will be awarded based on the requirements of the Even Start Statute. The review process includes two steps. Each proposal will initially be reviewed by a panel of three or more readers including one early childhood professional, one adult education professional and one individual with expertise in family literacy programs. These readers will read assigned proposals, discuss, and award points to each proposal according to the selection criteria described in this RFP.

Second, those applicants receiving the highest number of points may receive a site visit by a site review panel. Based on the site visit, proposals will again be rated on the same criteria used to review the application. Proposals receiving the greatest number of points on this second rating will be recommended to the State Board of Education for funding.

TIME LINES

All proposals will be reviewed and site visits will begin in March. The State Board of Education will review proposed recipients for approval at the June, July or August Board meeting. Grantees will be notified of awards after the Board's approval. Funding will be available to projects when NCDPI receives the funds from USED. This usually takes place in August or early September. The effective starting date of the project is July 1, 2011.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS OF PROPOSAL

The entire proposal must not exceed 40 pages including cover sheet, budget, and appendix.

- Proposals should be typed with **font size no smaller than 12-point Times, margins of one inch or more, and double-spaced.** (Charts, graphs, and letters of support may be single-spaced.) Proposals that are single-spaced, reduced in size, exceed 40 pages, use font size smaller than 12 point, or have margins smaller than one inch will not be reviewed and cannot be considered for funding.
- An optional appendix may be included to contain letters of support, cooperative agreements, and/or other appropriate documentation, **but must be counted as part of the 40 pages.**
- All pages should be consecutively numbered beginning with the cover sheet as page 1. Proposal parts and subsections under each part should be labeled as such.
- **Applications must be stapled.** Do not place in notebooks, folders, or other packaging.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION AND DEADLINE

Five copies, one with original signatures, should be sent to:

Donald Carter, Even Start State Coordinator
Office of Early Learning
Department of Public Instruction
2075 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-2075

Applications must be received by **5:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 22, 2011. Faxed copies will not be accepted.**

Hand-delivered applications must be brought to the Office of Early Learning in Raleigh, 1110 Navaho Dr. Suite 300 Room 25 (3rd floor) and given to Donald Carter -- by 5:00 p.m., March 22, 2011.

QUESTIONS

If you have questions, please call Don Carter, NC Even Start Coordinator, at (919) 981-5298, cell (919) 616-5595 or e-mail to donald.carter@ncpublicschools.gov. You are strongly encouraged to attend the Bidders' Application Meeting in Raleigh, January 19, 2011. You may download copies of the application on our Office of Early Learning web site at (<http://www.ncprek.nc.gov/EvenStart/esInfoforESCoordinators.asp>). To obtain dates and locations of the Bidder's Application Meeting please send an email [Donald Carter](#) with a list of attendees, their school and position.

Sept 20,2010